

## COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 1 DECEMBER 2025

#### **Present:**

Councillor Lee Hartshorne (Chair) (in the Chair)  
Councillor Graham Baxter MBE (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Frank Adlington-Stringer  
Councillor Nigel Barker  
Councillor Richard Beech  
Councillor David Cheetham  
Councillor Stephen Clough  
Councillor Suzy Cornwell  
Councillor Alex Dale  
Councillor Michael Durrant  
Councillor Kevin Gillott  
Councillor Daniel Higgon  
Councillor William Jones  
Councillor Carol Lacey  
Councillor Heather Liggett  
Councillor Stephen Pickering  
Councillor Michael Roe  
Councillor Ross Shipman  
Councillor Caroline Smith  
Councillor Mick Smith  
Councillor Richard Welton  
Councillor Pam Windley

Councillor Neil Baker  
Councillor Jayne Barry  
Councillor Joseph Birkin  
Councillor Kathy Clegg  
Councillor Andrew Cooper  
Councillor Charlotte Cupit  
Councillor Lilian Deighton  
Councillor Michelle Emmens  
Councillor David Hancock  
Councillor Pam Jones  
Councillor Pat Kerry  
Councillor Tony Lacey  
Councillor Fran Petersen  
Councillor Carolyn Renwick  
Councillor Kathy Rouse  
Councillor Derrick Skinner  
Councillor Christine Smith  
Councillor Martin E Thacker MBE JP  
Councillor Helen Wetherall

#### **Also Present:**

L Hickin	Managing Director - Head of Paid Service
M Broughton	Director of Growth and Assets
J Dethick	Director of Finance and Resources (Section 151 Officer)
S Sternberg	Assistant Director of Governance (Monitoring Officer)
A Smith	Legal Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer
C Terry	Environmental Health Team Manager (Licensing)
A Bryan	Governance Manager
M E Derbyshire	Governance Training & Technical Officer

#### **COU Apologies for Absence**

**/58/2**

**5-26** Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors P Antcliff, P Elliott, S Fawcett, M Foster, C Gare, N Morley, R Spooner, L Stone and K Tait.

#### **COU Declarations of Interest**

**/59/2**

**5-26** Councillors K Clegg, K Gillott, Christine Smith, and M Thacker MBE all declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Earl Park, Holmewood – New Homes Investment item, as Board Members of Rykneld Homes Limited. They would withdraw from the meeting for that item and take no part in the discussion or vote.

**COU** Minutes of Last Meeting

**/60/2**

**5-26** RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 22 September 2025, and the Extraordinary Council meetings held on 2 November 2025 and 11 November 2025 be approved as true and correct records.

**COU** Chairman of the Council's Announcements

**/61/2**

**5-26** The Chair delivered his announcements, noting that it had been some time since his last update.

He reported that National Fitness Day, held on 24 September 2025, had been marked by his participation in the district-wide *Climb Everest Challenge* across the Council's four sports centres. The event had successfully raised funds for his chosen charity, Macmillan Cancer Support. The Chair had completed 100 floors during the challenge and later attended a circuit training session at Clay Cross Active with his wife, Janice. He extended his thanks to the staff involved in organising the day and to all who kindly donated.

On 26 September 2025, the Chair had attended the Macmillan Coffee Morning at Mill Lane and expressed gratitude to everyone who baked and contributed.

The Chair then reported on his visit to the Ilkeston Charter Fair on 16 October 2025, which was a longstanding and vibrant event filled with fairground rides and family activities.

Turning to events of Remembrance, the Chair stated that early November had been focused on commemorations. He had attended the Festival of Remembrance at the Winding Wheel on 6 November 2025. On Remembrance Sunday, he had participated in the service at Grassmoor, and then joined the Chesterfield parade, and had laid a wreath at the War Memorial on behalf of the Council. He also thanked Wingerworth Parish Council for inviting him to its service on 11 November 2025, where he had laid a further wreath on the Council's behalf.

The Chair had also attended the Clay Cross Parish Council Presentation Evening, during which donations were awarded to local charities and groups. The Chair expressed appreciation for the Parish Council's donation in support of his chosen charity.

The Chair also reported being shown around the Macmillan Ward at Chesterfield Royal Hospital on 17 November 2025, accompanied by his wife. He noted the high standard of compassionate care delivered to patients and families. He recorded his thanks to the staff for making time to provide the tour. He advised that further fundraising events would take place throughout his term as Chair and welcomed Members' support.

The Chair also reported that he had attended the Mayor of High Peak's Masquerade Ball in Buxton, held in aid of several local charities.

Finally, the Chair reminded Members that donations were still being taken for the

local Food Bank.

**COU** **Leader of the Council's Announcements**  
**/62/2**

**5-26** The Leader provided an update on progress with Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). He reported that the districts, boroughs and the city council had submitted a proposal to Government, on the north-south unitary model, with several variations included. A decision was not expected until summer. In the meantime, preparatory, non-abortive work would continue to ensure readiness for any future reorganisation, emphasising the importance of cross-council cooperation, including with the County Council. The Leader noted that Derbyshire County Council had submitted an alternative proposal for a single county-wide unitary including Derby City, creating an authority of over one million residents.

The Leader raised a further matter involving Derbyshire County Council, highlighting the recent cabinet paper indicating a consultation on support for the new Clay Cross Library. He stressed that the library formed an integral part of the wider Clay Cross regeneration programme, and expressed concern that such a move might signal future withdrawal of support for the Adult Education Centre in the clock tower. He emphasised the importance of protecting the substantial investment made in these facilities, urging local Members to remain mindful of their responsibilities when decisions were taken.

Turning to the ongoing matters with Wingerworth Lido, the Leader noted that the matter continued to require considerable officer time. He thanked all those who had participated in the survey. He observed that the Scrutiny Committee had substantial evidence to consider and looked forward to receiving its report.

The Leader updated Members on broader regional engagement. He had met with Councillor Tom Hunt, Leader of Sheffield City Council, accompanied by the Leader of Chesterfield Borough Council to discuss potential tram-train extension opportunities into Derbyshire. He reported a positive discussion, highlighting the benefits for improved transport links into both Chesterfield and Sheffield. He also continued to attend EMCCA meetings and would be representing districts and boroughs at the upcoming EMCCA Transport Committee. He further reported chairing a recent meeting of the SLB, where changes were agreed to improve working arrangements with EMCCA, restoring direction and alignment.

The Leader had also met with the Law Centre, noting the reassuring and productive discussion, and the essential support the organisation provided to residents across North East Derbyshire.

He concluded on a positive note by announcing that both the Leisure Services and Street Scene teams had been nominated for APSE Awards in the categories of *Best Performer* and *Most Improved Performer*. He offered congratulations and wished them well at the awards ceremony.

The Leader informed Members that he would be attending the opening of the new full-size 3G pitch at Clay Cross Active, the final component of the site's development, which would provide a significant outdoor asset for local communities.

Finally, as this was the last scheduled full Council meeting of the year, the Leader extended his best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all Members.

**COU Public Participation**

**/63/2**

**5-26** No questions from the public had been received.

**COU Treasury Management Strategy Update - April to September 2025 (Q1 & Q2)**

**/64/2**

**5-26** The report to the Council, presented by Councillor P Kerry, updated on the Treasury Management activities for the period April to September 2025.

Councillor M Thacker MBE referred back to comments he had previously made at the Audit Committee, regarding the Council's loan portfolio and investment strategy and to consider a shift towards a medium-risk investment model. He emphasised that without doing so, the Council risked failing to maximise the return on its resources. The Director of Finance and Resources (Section 151 Officer) provided clarification on the Council's current borrowing position and emphasised that the Council's approved strategy already permitted a more risk-seeking approach than was currently taken in practice. She suggested the issue was not strategic in nature but operational, relating to where and how funds were placed. It was also reported that benchmarking provided by Arlingclose showed the Council currently sat in the middle quartile—neither high nor low risk.

RESOLVED – that the report concerning the Council's Treasury Management report for Quarter 2 be noted.

**COU Adoption of the Council's Statement of Principles under the Gambling Act 2005**

**5-26**

The report set out the draft Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Licensing Principles, to be adopted, together with the draft Gambling Act 2005 Local Area Profile.

The report explained that the Gambling Act 2005 imposed a statutory duty upon the Council, as the Licensing Authority, to prepare a Statement of Principles. The Policy served as the Council's tool for regulating gambling within the district and set out the controls the Council considered necessary for the effective management of gambling activities. It also provided guidance for Members, applicants, responsible authorities, and the public, with the aim of promoting fair, consistent and proportionate decision making.

RESOLVED – that:

- (1) the final draft Gambling Act 2005: Statement of Principles and accompanying Local Area Profile, as recommended by the Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee, for adoption no later than 16 March 2026, be approved.
- (2) the Council authorised the Environmental Health Service Manager to take all necessary steps to publish and formally adopt the Gambling Act

2005: Statement of Principles and Local Area Profile in accordance with the statutory requirements set out in legislation.

**COU Proportionality of the Council and Committee Appointments**

**/66/2**

**5-26** The Assistant Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer presented a report which set out changes to the proportionality of the Council.

The political balance for the Council as a whole and the specific bodies covered by the political balance requirements were set out in the report.

Councillor R Shipman expressed concerns regarding the proposed allocation of committee seats under the proportionality rules. He noted that the administration, despite holding a majority of only one Councillor, appeared to have secured 6% more committee seats than the proportional representation. Councillor Shipman proposed an amendment to add 'that a review of committee sizes be undertaken as soon as possible by Standards Committee or other appropriate body and a revised proportionality proposal be brought back to Council.'

Councillor D Hancock seconded the amendment and stated that he did not agree with the proposal, as it inflated the administration's representation and diminished that of the opposition groups. Councillor Hancock concluded that he wished his objection to the proposal to be recorded.

The Assistant Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer responded that the legislation was hierarchical and that it was an absolute requirement that the majority party had a majority on each committee.

Councillor K Gillott spoke in support of the Monitoring Officers advice and stated that he had served on several councils under different Monitoring Officers and that every one of them had consistently provided the same advice as that given to Council at this meeting: namely, that the majority party—regardless of political affiliation—must receive a majority on the relevant committees.

Councillor M Durrant spoke against the amendment and stated that he would listen to the advice of officers.

Councillor A Dale stated that the Conservative Group were content with the report as presented, and recognised that proportionality was inherently challenging but did agree that the North East Derbyshire Independent Group had raised a fair point with regard to its number of places on certain committees. He suggested that groups could meet informally to discuss options and try to find a solution collaboratively.

Councillor J Barry stated that the proposal as set out in the report should be accepted and then it could be reconsidered in time for the Annual Meeting in May 2026.

The amendment was put to the vote and lost.

A vote was taken on the original proposal and was passed.

RESOLVED – that the changes to the political make-up of the Council be noted and the proportional allocation of committee places be agreed.

**COU Questions from Members asked under Procedure Rule No 9.2**

**/67/2**

**5-26** The Chair confirmed that two questions had been received.

**Question A – Councillor R Welton to Councillor J Barry, Portfolio Holder for Growth and Assets**

We welcome the commitment made at the recent EGM 11 November 2025 to a review of the Council's Asset Management Board. Will the Cabinet Member involve cross party elected members in this review through a working group?

Councillor J Barry responded that she had committed to undertaking a review of the Disposals and Acquisitions Strategy, which the current administration had inherited from the previous administration. She noted that the strategy had not been reviewed since 2017, and therefore a review was clearly due. However, this work had been timed to follow completion of the Strategic Asset Management Plan, to ensure the two documents were aligned. She confirmed that the Asset Management Board's Terms of Reference had also been reviewed recently and remained fit for purpose. Turning to the question of establishing a cross-party group, she explained that property management was an Executive function, not a Council function. As such, it was for Cabinet to determine the future strategy. She therefore advised that the answer to this part of the question was no, although Cabinet would listen to the views expressed by Members as the review progressed.

Councillor R Welton asked a supplementary question seeking confirmation on whether Councillor K Gillott would be required to recuse himself from any involvement in the forthcoming review of the Strategy, on the grounds of a conflict of interest as a Cabinet member, with Cabinet being solely responsible for asset management, and as Chair of the Standards Committee, which had oversight of corporate governance.

Councillor J Barry confirmed that the right protocols would be followed for the review.

**Question B – Councillor A Dale to Councillor S Pickering, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Place**

Can the Portfolio Holder please provide an update on the extension of green bin collections over the winter, as suggested in the recent Simpler Recycling report and the plans for black and burgundy bin collections over the forthcoming Christmas period, with measures to avoid a repeat of the complaints in previous years?

Councillor S Pickering reminded Members that briefing sessions on Simpler Recycling would be held and encouraged all Councillors to attend to ask questions and increase their understanding of Simpler Recycling requirements and future service changes. Regarding green bin collections, Councillor Pickering confirmed that the Council intended to extend green bin collections from next

winter. In respect of black and burgundy bin collections over the Christmas period, he explained that the Council had already published updated bin calendars. Additional burgundy and black bin collections were being provided on either side of Christmas to help residents manage increased festive waste. He took the opportunity to thank all collection crews and staff involved in delivering waste services across the district.

Councillor A Dale echoed the praise for the refuse collection teams and that they deserved time off over the Christmas period. In respect of the green bin extension, he asked how long the winter extension would last. He also stated that he had received concerns from residents about some burgundy bins going three weeks without being emptied and noted that the primary issue appeared to be public awareness and therefore asked what further steps the Council could take to ensure that more residents were aware of their bin collection dates, particularly during the Christmas period.

Councillor Pickering confirmed that from next winter, the Council intended to provide an extended service, with only December left without a green bin collection. Further detail would be provided at forthcoming Member briefing sessions on Simpler Recycling. He added that, following a review of the bin calendar, no household should go more than a fortnight without a burgundy bin collection. If recyclable material was presented as side waste, crews would accept it, but non-recyclable side waste would be left, providing a clear explanation to residents where necessary. He invited the Member to share any specific cases where a longer gap had occurred so that officers could investigate but reiterated his understanding that the scheduling had been planned to minimise disruption as far as possible.

**COU Motions from Members under Procedure Rule No 10**

**/68/2**

**5-26** No Motions had been submitted under Procedure Rule 10 for the meeting.

**COU Chair's Urgent Business**

**/69/2**

**5-26** There was no urgent business.

**COU Exclusion of Public**

**/70/2**

**5-26** RESOLVED - that the public be excluded from the meeting during the discussion of the following item of business to avoid the disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006).

Having each declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in the next item, Councillors K Clegg, K Gillott, Christine Smith, and M Thacker MBE all left the meeting and took no part in the discussion or vote.

**COU Earl Park, Holmewood - New Homes Investment**

**/71/2**

**5-26** Council considered a report which sought approval for borrowing to fund a request for investment, in the form of a loan, from Rykneld Homes Ltd (RHL) for

the acquisition of homes for affordable rent at Earls Park, Holmewood.

An amendment to defer the item was moved and seconded by Councillor D Hancock and Councillor R Welton. This was put to the vote and defeated.

**RESOLVED** – that:

- (1) Council approved the borrowing, as set out in the report, to fund the loan to RHL for the acquisition of homes at Earls Park.
- (2) Council approved the revised Capital Financing Requirement, Operational Boundary and Authorised Limit as set out in the financial implications section of the report.